

# FREDERICK COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

CITIZENS SERVICES BUILDING

401 Sagner Ave.

Frederick, MD 21701

## MINUTES of the May 29, 2018 Meeting

- I. The meeting was held at Winchester Hall, and called to order by Chair Mari Lee. An invitation was extended to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.
- II. The following members were present: Mari Lee, Lisa Clark, Lee Whisner, Francisco Alves, Adam Book, Marguerite Vacca-Kaye, David Kaye, Annette Breiling, Roger Sobkowiak, Michael Baran, Blair Pettrey, Irene Packer-Halsey and City of Frederick liaison member Ben MacShane. FPD representative Captain Patrick Grossman was present. HRC applicant Paula Glascoe was also present.
- III. Guest speaker Maria Herrera, Executive Director of Spanish Speaking Community of Maryland, Inc., presented informative remarks on the activities of this non-profit organization. She described its work as helping those who suffer in silence, including victims of sex trafficking, abuse, abandonment, people with disabilities, and immigrants who are dealing with difficult cultural changes. The organization provides language translation assistance that enables people to receive other services, including medical, legal, and educational. Ms. Herrera said that the organization receives referrals from, and works closely with, Frederick County Public Schools, churches, the Department of Social Services, Heartly House and law enforcement agencies. It also helps people find jobs. She asked that HRC members spread the word about this organization so people will know about the services it offers.
- IV. Captain Pat Grossman said that the graduation ceremony for the current FPD recruit academy will take place on June 8, and HRC members are invited to attend.
- V. Treasurer Annette Breiling reported that the HRC has a current balance on hand of \$3,788.
- VI. Government Relations Committee members reported that after meeting with Mr. Willie Mahone, HRC liaison member Jet Reid from Frederick County Public Schools, and others, a letter had been drafted. It addresses both the NAACP's request to support a moratorium on some long term suspensions, and the use of racist words at high school sporting events. During discussion of these matters, it was suggested that instead of combining these topics in one letter, it would be preferable to separate them and send two letters. Upon motion by Roger Sobkowiak and second by Annette Breiling, the HRC voted to prepare two letters that will be sent to the Board of Education after members have a chance to review and comment on them.

- VII. Michal Baran reported on behalf of the duly appointed Nominating Committee, composed of himself, Lisa Clark and Chris Isleib. The current HRC officers had been contacted to determine their interest in serving another term. The Nominating Committee presented the following slate of officers, which will be offered for consideration by the membership when an election is held at the June 2018 HRC meeting:

Chair: Mari Lee  
Vice-Chair: Lisa Clark  
Parliamentarian: David Kaye  
Treasurer: Annette Breiling  
Member at Large: Lee Whisner

- VIII. Alderman and HRC liaison member Ben MacShane reported on a number of matters that are underway at the City. A committee is holding meetings to review its Disadvantaged Business Enterprises program. The City will soon be presenting an Immigration Month Heritage proclamation and HRC members are invited to attend. The City has budgeted funds for a study on increasing diversity in the City's workforce. All of the individual bathrooms inside Frederick City Hall are now officially designated as all-gender, and similar changes in some other City buildings are being considered. He explained that he made a request to do this in order to make gender diverse members of the community more comfortable when using restrooms in city buildings. The City has changed its hiring practices by removing questions about an applicant's criminal background until after a conditional offer of employment is made. Questions about an applicant's salary history will no longer be asked at any time.
- IX. Mari Lee reviewed with members the current schedule for Frederick Neighborhood Advisory Council (NAC) meetings, and confirmed which members will be attending specific meetings to present the informational PowerPoint program about what the HRC is and what it does.
- X. Discussion was held about the upcoming Asbury Block Party and Frederick Pride, which again this year will be held on the same day, June 23. There will be an HRC table at the Asbury Block Party. HRC members were reminded that Frederick Pride has been designated as an HRC day of service, and members were encouraged to go on-line and register to work a volunteer shift at the event.
- XI. It was agreed to move the HRC June meeting to Tuesday, June 19, at 6 pm at Winchester Hall. This was because the previously scheduled date, June 26, is the date for primary elections, and a number of HRC members are involved in election activities of different kinds on that date. Steps will be taken to provide notice of this change in the meeting date.
- XII. Michael Baran discussed efforts that are underway by the Equal Justice Initiative at its recently opened Legacy Museum and National Memorial for Peace and Justice (informally known as the National Lynching Memorial) in Montgomery, Alabama. The museum will present a narrative of racial injustice in America, starting with enslavement. The National Memorial for Peace and Justice honors the lives of more than 4400 African Americans lynched from 1877 to 1950, whose names will be engraved on duplicate sets of columns,

two for each county where a lynching was documented. Counties will later be invited to claim their columns and install them at original lynching sites.

There were three documented lynchings in Frederick County that will be honored by columns. Michael proposed that the HRC consider participating in a coordinated effort to make the necessary contacts and go to Alabama to claim the Frederick County column, and install it at an appropriate venue here. It was suggested that it might be possible for the HRC to pay for a member's expenses. The proposal was well received and he was encouraged to look into things further and make a formal written proposal to the HRC Executive Committee at some point in the future.

XIII. Members who chose to do so made brief final comments.

XIV. The meeting was adjourned.